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PRONUNCIATION OF

GA

by J. Berry, B.A.

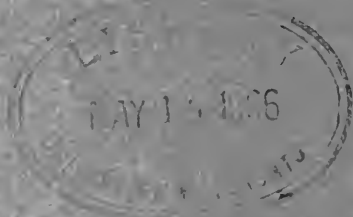
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The Pronunciation of GA

BY

J. BERRY, B.A.

(Lecturer in West African Languages, University of London)

**Illustrated by two gramophone records made by
T. Q. Botchway**

This is the second in a series of short pamphlets on the more important languages of the Gold Coast. These languages have common difficulties for the English learner. The main are:—

(i) The tones: Ga is a tone language (see p. 12).

(ii) Certain exotic sounds not found in European languages. Traditional grammars offer little help and the beginner is apt to be discouraged from the outset. In this series the particular needs of the student in the early stages are kept in mind. The text describes briefly the various speech sounds of which the language is composed and the modes of producing them; the accompanying gramophone records provide examples and material for the student to use in putting into practice what he has learnt. Having worked through the following pages, he should be well on the way to acquiring an adequate pronunciation of Ga and could begin with an informant or teacher the study of a grammar such as Mrs. M. B. Wilkie's *Ga Grammar, Notes and Exercises*.¹

The orthography of Ga, as recommended by the Ga Society,² is in almost every respect a "phonetic" one, and the letters used here are those of the present spelling. The system of tone marking is that used by Professor Ida C. Ward in her *Pronunciation of Twi*, pamphlet I in this series.

¹ Oxford University Press, 1930.

² *Ga Word-List with Rules of Spelling*, Accra, 1946.

The Gramophone Records.

The material of the records is:—

- Record I (Part 1) Vowels, difficult consonants, the semi-vowel *w̃*.
 „ I („ 2) Long vowels, successions of vowels, tones.
 „ II („ 1) Sentences, greetings.
 „ II („ 2) Conversation.

Groups of examples spoken on the records are marked by a star (★) in the margin of the text. The complete text of Record I will be found in the Appendix.

The words are recorded leaving time for the repetition of each word. It is useful to listen for some time before beginning to imitate. After this, the student should repeat many times until the exact pronunciation of the sounds can be reproduced without difficulty. It is useful to reverse the order, i.e. the student to read each word from the text before playing the record. Finally, let him practise saying the words without the record. This is a help towards developing a memory for the sounds and tones of the language as well as a means of building up a vocabulary.

Note.—No two persons pronounce exactly alike. It should be remembered that there is a considerable diversity of pronunciation and usage amongst present-day speakers of Ga, particularly in Accra. This study is based upon the speech of Mr. T. Q. Botchway. The examples in the text were taken from his speech and the recordings were made by him.

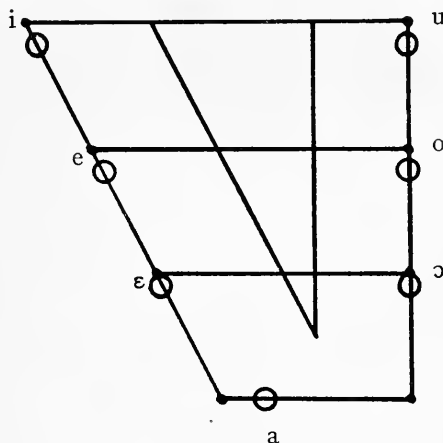
I. The Vowels.

The Ga vowels are not difficult. The most common fault with English learners is a tendency to diphthongize what are in Ga pure vowels, particularly when the latter are long. For example, in pronouncing *i* and *u*, a glide is heard as the tongue moves from a low position to a closer one. Similarly, *e* and *o* are often replaced by *ej* and *ow*. This may be avoided if care is taken not to move the tongue and lips during the production of vowel sounds.

Ga has seven significant vowels: they are represented by the letters:

i, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u.

The cardinal vowel chart below gives their tongue positions.¹ Their lip positions in each case are normal for the type of vowel, viz. *i* has spread lips, *e* spread, but slightly more open, *ɛ* less spread, nearing neutral position, *a* neutrally open lips; *ɔ* has open rounding, *o* closer rounding and *u* very close rounding.



Cardinal vowels ●
Ga vowels (oral) ○

EXAMPLES.

i is near to Cardinal No. 1, a close vowel.

* bi [ɪ] *child* Kofi [kɔfɪ] *a name for boys
born on Friday* sikle [sɪkɪl] *sugar*

e is somewhat lower than Cardinal No. 2; it is near the first element of a typical English diphthong ej (as in *day*).

be [_] *time* hela [_ _] *sickness* amale [_ _] *lie*

This vowel occurs:

(i) As a prefix.

enumã [ˈɛ̃mã] *five* ekãa [ˈɛ̃kãa] *bravery* emomo [ˈɛ̃momo] *old*

(ii) As the third person singular pronominal prefix.

etee [-] *he has gone* eda [-] *he is big* enine [-] *his hand*

¹ For an explanation of cardinal vowels and other phonetic terms, see Westermann and Ward, *Practical Phonetics for Students of African Languages*.

ɛ is a little more open than the e of English *bed*—about Cardinal No. 3. It should offer no difficulty.

pɛ [ˈ] *just, exactly* kwɛ *to look at* lɛɛ [ˌˌ] *ship*

e and ɛ contrasted:

★	te [ˈ]	<i>how, what</i>	tɛ [ˈ]	<i>stone</i>
	ke [ˈ]	<i>woodpile</i>	kɛ [ˈ]	<i>if</i>
	he [ˌ]	<i>body</i>	hɛ [ˌ]	<i>waist</i>

a is front, fairly near to Cardinal No. 4, rather like the French **a** in *table*, further forward than the English **a** in *father* and more open than the English **a** in *man*. Those who find it difficult to imitate should try to isolate the first element in the English diphthong *aj* (as in *white*) which is quite near the Ga sound.

★ ga [ˌ] *ring* ta [ˌ] *war* dade [ˌˌ] *iron*

This vowel occurs as a prefix:

abɛ [ˌˌ] *proverb* adeka [ˌˌˌ] *box* adesa [ˌˌˌ] *story*

ɔ is near to Cardinal No. 6, not quite so open as the English vowel in *not*, nearer rather to that in *caught*.

wɔ [ˈ] *to-morrow* kɔ *to pick up* gbɔ [ˌ] *stranger*

o is a half close rounded vowel, a little lower than Cardinal No. 7. A similar vowel occurs as the first element of the English diphthong *ow* (as in *boat*). English speakers tend to substitute for the Ga **o** when short an English **u** as in *put*. The two sounds have a considerable resemblance, but the Ga is less fronted and requires more lip rounding than the English sound.

ekome [ˌˌˌ] *one* pamplo [ˌˌ/] *bamboo* gowa [ˌˌˌ] *guava*

This vowel occurs:

(i) As a prefix.

oblayoo [ˌˌˌˌ]¹ *maiden* obonu [ˌˌˌ] *talking drum*
 onufu [ˌˌˌ] *snake*

(ii) As the second person singular pronominal prefix.

Onu lo? [ˌˌˌˌ] *Do you understand?* omama [ˌˌˌˌ] *your cloth*

¹ ˌˌˌˌ implies that the sound is syllabic (may have its own tone), see p. 12.

(iii) As the second person singular object pronoun in its shortened form.

Miŋa o [ˈˌ] *Good day to you* aatʃe o [ˈˌ] *You are called*

o and ɔ contrasted:

★ eto [ˌˌ]	<i>he kept it</i>	eto [ˌˌ]	<i>his bottle</i>
bo [ˌˌ]	<i>you</i>	bo [ˌˌ]	<i>dew</i>
efo [ˌˌ]	<i>he cut it</i>	efo [ˌˌ]	<i>it is wet</i>

u—a close rounded back vowel near to Cardinal No. 8.

★ bu [ˌˌ]	<i>hole</i>	fufɔ [ˌˌ]	<i>milk</i>	duku [ˌˌ]	<i>kerchief</i>
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II. Nasalization of Vowels.

All vowels except e and o have nasal counterparts, not differing unduly in quality.

ehĩ [ˌˌ]	<i>it is good</i>	gugɔ̃¹ [ˌˌ]	<i>nose</i>
etẽ [ˌˌ]	<i>three</i>	tũ [ˌˌ]	<i>gun</i>
kã [ˌˌ]	<i>dish</i>		

Oral vowels and nasal vowels contrasted:

★ ʃi	<i>to knock</i>	ʃĩ	<i>to leave</i>
kɛ [ˌˌ]	<i>if</i>	kẽ [ˌˌ]	<i>by all means!</i> <i>certainly</i>
ka	<i>to hammer</i>	kã	<i>to lie (e.g. on the ground)</i>
kɔ [ˌˌ]	<i>a door of plaited grasses</i>	kɔ̃¹	<i>to bite</i>
fu	<i>to moulder</i>	fũ¹	<i>a smell</i>

In the current orthography nasalization is marked only where misunderstanding might arise from its omission. The student must therefore observe nasalization for himself (mark ~ to distinguish in the early stages). It must be remembered that there are degrees of nasality. In the neighbourhood of nasal consonants vowels are normally nasalized: for example, the vowels in ŋma [ˌˌ],

¹ The student should guard against the common tendency of beginners to add the nasal consonant ŋ to the back vowels; there should be no contact of the tongue with any part of the roof of the mouth.

scent, and ɲaa [ː], *wisdom*, are slightly nasal owing to the proximity of ɲm and ɲ (compare the nasal "twang" of the English vowel *a* in *man*), but in ɲmã, *to write*, and ɲã [ː], *wife*, the nasalization is much stronger: in the first case the nasalization is, as it were, "dependent" (and therefore need not be noted), in the second, it is deliberate and is an essential feature of the word.

III. Vowel Length.

All vowels occur short and long. Vowel length is important. The following pairs of words illustrate the two quantities.

	Short Vowel		Long Vowel
★	pi [ː] <i>well</i>	pīi [ː] <i>many</i>	
	gbe <i>to kill</i>	gbee [ː] <i>voice</i>	
	ba <i>to come</i>	baa [ː] <i>leaf</i>	
	tɔ [ː] <i>bottle</i>	tɔɔ <i>to be replete</i>	
	ko [ː] <i>a, certain</i>	koo [ː] <i>forest</i>	
	bu [ː] <i>hole</i>	buu [ː] <i>mosquito net</i>	

The verbal noun is formed from certain verbs by lengthening the root vowel, e.g.

★	ba <i>to come</i>	baa [ː] <i>coming</i>
	ya <i>to go</i>	yaa [ː] <i>going</i>
	dzu <i>to steal</i>	dzuu [ː] <i>theft</i>
	le <i>to rear</i>	lee [ː] <i>rearing</i>

Note.—Ga actually makes use of several degrees of vowel length. Compare, for example, the relative lengths of vowel in the following words.

(1) (short)	ba [ː]	<i>come!</i>
(2) (half-long)	ebaako [ː / ː]	<i>he will pick up</i>
(3) (long)	ebaa [ːː]	<i>he comes</i> (habitual)
	baa [ːː]	<i>leaf</i>
(4) (very long)	baa [ːːː]	<i>crocodile</i>

The lengths illustrated in (2) and (4), however, appear to depend on tonal movement and no examples have been found affecting meaning other than as tone.

IV. Succession of Vowels.

Nearly every possible combination of vowels in sequence is to be found in roots. A few are given below.

★	bie [̣-]	<i>here</i>	kao [̣_]	<i>sweet biscuit</i>
	abeo [̣-̣]	<i>mishap</i>	kue [̣_]	<i>neck</i>
	Akua [̣-̣]	<i>name for girls</i>	wuo [̣_]	<i>fishing</i>

The habitual tense of the verb is formed by the addition of a suffix to the root.

★	ebio	<i>he asks</i>	ebɛɔ	<i>he pinches</i>
	efɛɔ	<i>he does</i>	ekao	<i>he hammers</i>
	ehoo	<i>he cooks</i>	ewuo	<i>he bathes in the sea</i>

The tone is in all cases [̣-̣].

Similarly, the plural of some nouns is formed by the addition of a suffix to the root.

★	toi [̣_]	<i>sheep</i>	bai [̣_]	<i>leaves</i>	fai [̣_]	<i>rivers</i>
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V. The Semi-Vowels.

y needs no comment.

w written w has two sounds:

- (i) The normal velar **w** (as in English) which occurs before all vowels except i.
- (ii) The palatal semi-vowel, i.e. with front of tongue raised to the hard palate as in French *huit*. This occurs only before i, e and ɛ.

The student would be well advised in the early stages to mark for himself the palatal variety as an aid to memory. The usual method is (w̃).

<i>Velar</i>		<i>Palatal</i>	
we [̣_]	<i>house</i>	★ w̃i	<i>to avoid</i>
wɛ	<i>to come to a stop</i>	w̃ere	<i>to sit by the fire</i>
wa	<i>to be hard</i>	w̃ɛ	<i>to cohabit</i>
wɔ	<i>to sleep</i>		
wo [̣_]	<i>honey</i>		
wu [̣_]	<i>husband</i>		

VI. The Consonants.

With the exception of the sounds with double articulation (see below), consonants in Ga should offer little difficulty. The plosives *p, b; t, d; k, g*, for example, are very much as in English.

p, t, k are aspirated. *b, d, g* are fully voiced.

Note.—There is a tendency amongst some Gas to articulate *t* as a dental, i.e. with a flat and spread tongue well forward on the alveolar touching the upper teeth. With the same speakers *d* is somewhat retracted from this position, i.e. a normal alveolar as in English.

pii [_]	<i>much, many</i>	pāpām [_ _ ^]	<i>towel</i>
bi [^]	<i>child</i>	abifao [_ _ ^ ^]	<i>baby in arms</i>
toi [_ ^]	<i>ear</i>	tɔŋtɔŋ [_ ^ ^]	<i>mosquito</i>
da	<i>to be big</i>	duade [_ _ ^]	<i>cassava</i>
kɔi [^ -]	<i>hoe</i>	kokoo [_ \]	<i>cocoa</i>
ga [_]	<i>ring</i>	gɔŋ [_]	<i>hill</i>

tʃ and *dz* are prepalatal affricates, i.e. they are articulated against the fore-part of the hard palate (the tip of the tongue being down). They resemble the English sounds in *chapter* and *Jack*. Before front vowels it is a good idea for the beginner to articulate with the lips well spread¹; this serves to distinguish *tʃ* from *tʃw* and *dz* from *dzw*. The latter pair have strong lip rounding (see below). *tʃ* is aspirated, *dz* has little friction.

★ tʃɛ [_]	<i>father</i>	tʃofā [_ _]	<i>medicine</i>	tʃui [_ ^]	<i>heart</i>
dzeŋ [_]	<i>world</i>	Dzu [^]	<i>Monday</i>	dzata [_ ^]	<i>lion</i>

m, n need no description (see, however, p. 12 for examples of syllabic *m* and *n*).

ny is a palatal nasal and is one sound, cf. *gn* in the French *montagne*. (English speakers tend to substitute the sound in *new* which is *n* plus *y*.)

★ nyē [_]	<i>mother</i>	nyōmō [_ _]	<i>debt</i>	enyo [^ -]	<i>two</i>
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*ŋ*¹ is a velar nasal, the sound in English *king*. Unlike English, Ga frequently begins words with this sound. If the student

¹ The English affricates may have some lip-rounding.

★ ꠆ꠦꠘ *to be sweet* ablongo [__-] *palm oil cake*
ablongwa [__-__]

sann [̃] *very* dzogbann [̃̃] *well*

★ mla [-] law ɲmlɛ [-] bell
kplotoo [-/] pig gblā [-] marriage

¹ Written **ŋ** has several realisations in modern Ga speech. See p. 16 on assimilation of consonants.

r varies between speakers. The commoner types are:

- (i) Between vowels—a voiced alveolar fricative similar to the English sound.

★ here to save dzurõ [__] to be right, good
to catch fire dzra [_] market

- (ii) After alveolar and palatal consonants, a voiced fricative ((i) above) or a rolled lingual consonant of two to three taps. The second variety is usually syllabic and bears its own tone. Cf. **tro** [_ ̣], *threepence*, where **tr** is articulated on the teeth.

* tʃwɛbo [__] *flint*

- (iii) After **m** occasionally a flapped **r** (the sides of the tongue touch the upper teeth. Cf. flapped **l** above).

* mrã [̃] *quickly*

- (iv) After all other consonants **r** is usually the rolled lingual described in (ii) above.

Note.—**r** and **l** are found as variants in the same word.

- (a) klāņ or krāņ [_], *wolf*,
klomōbi or kromōbi [^ -], *first born*,

where *r* is a fricative.

- (b) hləno or hrəno or rəno [_ _], *blister*,
hliihlii or hrii or riirii [/ /],

where hl represents a velar fricative plus a weak l, and r is strongly rolled with or without preaspiration. Very few words of this type are to be found in the language.

f, v; s, z; h¹ call for no comment.

ʃ is a prepalatal fricative, the sound represented in English by the letters *sh*. Cf. **tʃ** described above.

★ aŋinao [__] *beads* ʃuo [__] *elephant*
 ʃito [__] *pepper* ʃōtō *to strangle*

¹ *h* before *l* is realised by some speakers as a velar fricative, the sound in Scottish *loch*, see note on *r* and *l*.

Sounds with more than one articulation.

These are the difficult sounds for the beginner. They are:

- (i) The labiovelars.
- (ii) The labialized counterparts of *ɟ*, *tɟ* and *dz*.

kp, gb, ŋm. In articulating these consonants two stops are made simultaneously; the back of the tongue touches the soft palate as for *k*, *g* or *ŋ* and the lips are touching for the *p*, *b* or *m* stop. They are most difficult to hear and to imitate in initial position. The student might best begin his practice in words such as:

akpaki [_ ˊˊ] *calabash*

where the on-glide from the vowel makes it easier to hear the *k*. In repeating, care must be taken that the two articulations really are simultaneous. The on-glide to the *k* must not be heard before the lips come together for the *p* position, i.e. it must be *a-kpaki* not *ak-paki*. In the same way, the two stops must be released together.

★	kpai ¹ [_ ˊ]	<i>cheeks</i>	kpakpo [_ ˊ]	<i>billy goat</i>
	gbɛ [_]	<i>road</i>	kpata [_ ˊ]	<i>kitchen</i>
	akpaki [_ ˊˊ]	<i>calabash</i>	gbogbo [_ _]	<i>wall</i>
	gbekɛ [ˊ -]	<i>child</i>	agba [_ _]	<i>bivouac</i>

ŋm is the nasal counterpart of **gb**. Cf. English *bri-ngme*.

★	ŋme [ˊ]	<i>palm nut</i>	ŋmɔ̃ [ˊ]	<i>farm</i>
	ŋmei [_]	<i>thorn</i>	ɛŋmɔ̃mi [ˊ - -]	<i>ocru</i>

ɬw, tɬw, dzw are labialized *ɟ*, *tɟ* and *dz*,² i.e. the sounds are articulated with the lips rounded and protruded. In the case of

¹ **kp** is inaspirate and the release is often more in the nature of a *b* than a *p*. **gb** has a firmer lip pressure.

² Those who know Twi might compare the Ga sounds with **tw** and **dw** in that language. The main differences are:

- (i) the type of lip-rounding used;
- (ii) the degree of palatalization: in making the Twi **tw** the tongue is more arched and nearer the hard palate; there is also a pronounced (-w̃) glide which is absent in the Ga sound.

f and tf there is strong friction not only between tongue and palate but between the edge of the top teeth and the inside of the bottom lip (cf. the position for f): dzw has little friction. tfw and dzw occur before front vowels only.

Labialized and non-labialized consonants contrasted.

★	tfa	to dig	tfwa	to strike
	dza	to divide	dzwa	to break
	dzei [ʔ-]	there	dzwei [ʔ-]	rubbish
	fɛ	to reach	fwe	to remain
	fane	to slip	fwane	afternoon

Note.—These sounds are written as polygraphs, but it should be remembered that a *single* sound is represented, not a sequence of sounds ending with w.

VII. Tone.

Ga is a tone language, i.e. every syllable in the language has as an integral part of its formation, a musical pitch¹ or tone. The tone is usually carried by the vowel in the syllable, but in Ga, m, n, ŋ, l and r are sonants and may have their own tone.² It is necessary to distinguish:

(i) Syllables of *low* tone (these are most easily recognised).

★ wu [] husband fine [] wing gbobilo [] hunter

(ii) Syllables pronounced on a pitch higher than low. These may be:

¹ The pitch is relative, not absolute. A child, for example, will give a pitch to his syllables, whether high or low, the physical frequency of which is much greater than the pitches of syllables spoken by an adult. Moreover, the actual *difference* in pitch between low and high tones is not of any great importance. What does matter, however, is that some difference in pitch shall be maintained between high- and low-toned syllables.

² As in mfoa []_x, pimple; nsodo []_x; ŋta []_x, twin; ŋkatie []_x-- groundnut; tro []_x, threepence; ble []_x-, then (cf. ble [], pipe).

The following words each contain syllables of low and high or mid tone. They are given for practice in recognising tonal patterns. They illustrate the more common types of interval found in Ga.

★ tʃoku [] *log* kwakwe [] *mouse* ʃika [] *money*

★ sisa [ˈsɪsə] *ghost* duku [ˈdʊkʊ] *kerchief* biyoo [ˈbiːjuː] *daughter*

★ dzei [̥-] *there* nuntʃo [̥-] *master* biɛ [̥-] *here*

from (ii) obiŋi [__] *rat* owula [__] *master*

In addition to the level pitches described above there are found syllables with a pitch movement up or down.

gbekẽ lɛ ekplɛ tʃu lɛŋ bɔtɛmɔ [ʔ-ʔ-ʔ-ʔ-ʔ-ʔ] *the child did not wish to enter the room*

(i) Rising tone, rises from low to mid or high, the distinction is unimportant (cf. low-high).

★ gbee [↗] *dog* looflɔ̃ [↗_] *bird* aboloo [ˉˊ] *bread*

(ii) Falling tone, is of two types: (a) falling to mid, (b) falling to low (cf. high-mid and high-low).

★ (a) nɛɛ [ˊˊ] *this* nii [ˊˊ] *things*

yibii [ˊˊˊ] *fruit*

(b) kaaloo [ˊˊˊˊ] *lime* nɛɛgbɛ [ˊˊˊˊ] *where*

elaa¹ [ˊˊˊˊ] *he sings*

(iii) Combinations of (i) and (ii).

Rising-falling ((i) plus (iia)).

★ kaa [↗ˊ] *crab* baa [↗ˊ] *crocodile*

Rising-falling ((i) plus (iib)). The rise is to mid.

★ kɛɛ [↗ˊˊ] *to say* hoo [↗ˊˊ] *to cook*

fee [↗ˊˊ] *to do*

The importance of tonal accuracy in speaking Ga even in the earliest stages cannot be over-emphasised. The following are but a few of the many pairs of words in Ga distinguished by tone alone.

la [ˊˊ]	<i>blood</i>	[ˊˊ]	<i>fire</i>
fū [ˊˊ]	<i>to smell</i>	[ˊˊˊ]	<i>to swell up</i>
wɔ̃dzi [ˊˊˊ]	<i>eggs</i>	[ˊˊˊˊ]	<i>fetishes</i>
awale [ˊˊˊˊ]	<i>the game</i>	[ˊˊˊˊˊ]	<i>a spoon</i>

It is always wise to learn tone and word together as the vocabulary is built up and it must be remembered that a word may have more than one tone pattern, i.e. the tone of a word heard in isolation will not always be the tone that that word has in connected speech. Particularly is this true of the verb with its complicated tonal paradigm and its several tonal

¹ Not to be confused with the negative of verbs which is:

★ eláa [ˊˊˊˊ], *he does not sing*;

compare also:

★ mitāa [ˊˊˊˊ], *I tell stories*, and mitāa [ˊˊˊˊˊ], *I do not tell stories*.

conjugations. A detailed analysis of tonal behaviour in Ga would require more space than this short study allows. All that is possible is to give a few examples of the many types of tone change that may be expected; see below.

In addition to the conversation, a few short sentences are given on Record II for the student to practise hearing and repeating tones. As a start, it is always well to learn the tone patterns of common groups of words, particularly of greetings and everyday questions and answers.

VIII. Sounds in Connected Speech.

When the student comes to study connected speech he will find many changes in the pronunciation of words which he has learnt only in isolation, as it were. These changes may be described under the four headings of Tone Change, Similitude, Vowel Elision and Consonant Weakening.

Modern speakers of Ga, even in careful speech tend increasingly to elide sounds and even syllables. This can make the language difficult to follow and the student would be well advised from the beginning to think in terms of word groups rather than words and above all, to pay attention to what is said rather than what the books would have us say.

TONE CHANGE.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ★ A. tʃɛkwẽ [_ ¯], <i>uncle</i>
tedzi [¯ ¯], <i>ass</i> | but mitʃɛkwẽ [¯ ¯ ¯], <i>my uncle</i>
but Ama tedzi [¯ ¯ ¯ ¯], <i>Ama's ass</i> |
| ★ B. baa [_], <i>leaf</i>
adeka [_ ¯], <i>box</i> | but baa lɛ [¯ / ¯], <i>the leaf</i>
but adeka lɛ [_ ¯ ¯ ¯], <i>the box</i> |
| ★ C. kpoŋ [¯ ¯], <i>hook</i>
ɛbɔ̣ [_ ¯ ¯], <i>he shouted</i> | but kpoŋ ko [¯ ¯ ¯], <i>a hook</i>
but ɛbɔ̣ amẽ [_ ¯ ¯ ¯ ¯], <i>he shouted</i>
<i>at them</i> |
| ★ D. mibahe [¯ ¯ \], <i>I shall buy</i> | but mibahe kɔ̣mi [¯ ¯ ¯ ¯ ¯ ¯], <i>I shall</i>
<i>buy kenkey (corn bread)</i> |
| ★ mihoo [¯ ^], <i>I have done</i>
<i>the cooking</i> | but mihoo yɔ̣ɔ̣ lɛ [¯ / / ¯], <i>I have</i>
<i>cooked the beans</i> |

SIMILITUDE.

Note that in the present orthography written **ɲ** may have more than one realization in speech.

- (i) Before alveolar consonants it is the alveolar nasal.

ɲta [_ ʔ], *double*, is pronounced **nta**.

ɲsra [_ ʔ], *riddle*, is pronounced **nsra**.

- (ii) Before palatal consonants it is the palatal nasal.

maɲtʃɛ [_ ɲ], *chief*, is pronounced **maɲtʃɛ**.

akaɲʃilo [_ ɲ _ ʔ], *competitor*, is pronounced **akaɲʃilo**.

The nasal is articulated with a very light palatal touch and frequently a close nasal vowel is substituted for the stop.

- (iii) Before labial and labiovelar consonants it is the labiovelar nasal.

ɲkpai [_ ɲ -], *libation*, is pronounced **ɲmkpai**.

ɲɪpo [_ ɲ], *shallows of a lagoon*, is pronounced **ɲmkp**.

VOWEL ELISION AND CONTRACTION.

ɛ is elided before **a**. The resulting vowel is lengthened.

ɛbɛ ataade [_ ɛ _ / ʔ], *he has no clothes*, is pronounced **ebaataade**.

ɛ followed by **o** is contracted to (ɔ:).

ʃɛ ofɔ [ʔ ʔ -], *throw it away!* is pronounced **ʃɔɔfɔ**.

a followed by **e** is contracted to (ɛ:).

eta edɛ [_ ɛ _], *he shook hands with him*, is pronounced **etɛɛdɛ**.

Note.—The tone is maintained.

WEAKENING AND DISAPPEARANCE OF CONSONANTS.

In quick speech there is a tendency:

- (i) For **h** to be weakened and drop out.

e'edzɔ ehe [_ ʔ _ ʔ], *he was surprised*, for **ehedzɔ ehe**.

- (ii) For a syllable with a liquid initial to be dropped. The preceding syllable is compensatorily lengthened.

wo(o)maa nɔ̃ [\ \ _], *lift up your cloth*, for wo omama
 ɛ nɔ̃.

- (iii) A syllable with a nasal initial to be contracted to ŋ (finally) or to a nasal homorganic with the following consonant.

eyɛŋ ɛɛŋ [_ _ ^ -], *it's true*, for eyɛ mli ɛɛɛŋ.

ɲfee [_ ^], *I did it*, for mifeɛ [_ ^].

ŋmgbɛ ɾɔba ɛ ɔɔ? [^ _ ^ - _], *where is the rubber?* for nɛsgbɛ
 ɾɔba ɛ ɔɔ.

- (iv) Reduplicated syllables to be contracted.

Paa Dzoo [/ /], *Father Dzoo*, for Papa Dzo.

blodo [_ _], *bread*, for bodobodo.

omaa [_ \], *your cloth*, for omama.

The above are but a few examples of contraction and elision to be found in modern colloquial Ga. There are many others which the student must note for himself.

RECORD II

Side 1

Twenty Simple Sentences

Nɛsgbɛ ɔdzɛ? [\ _ _ _]	Where are you coming from?
Midzɛ nitʃumɔ [_ _ ^ -]	I am coming from work.
Nɛsgbɛ oyaa? [\ _ _ _]	Where are you going?
Miiya ʃia [^ - -]	I am going home.
Enyiɛ atʃwa? [^ \ _]	What time is it?
Atʃwa ɲmɛdzɪ enyɔ [^ _ _ _ ^]	It is two o'clock.
Tɛ atʃɔ o tɛŋ? [^ _ ^ _]	What is your name?
Atʃɔ mi Kwafi [_ ^ _ _]	I am called Kwasi.
Mɛni ɔtao yɛ biɛ? [^ _ _ \ _ _ ^ -]	What do you want here?
Miitao bo fioo [^ \ _ ^ -]	Could you spare me a minute?
Osiklɛ ɛ enyiɛnyiɛ? [^ - ^ - ^ - -]	How do you sell your sugar?
Edzwɛ kpāa [^ _ _]	Four for a farthing.

Mɛni ofɛɔ? [ˌ__ˌ_]	What are you doing?
Mɪŋho nii [ˌ___-]	I'm selling things.
Mibaya Koforidua wɔ leebi [ˌ___-ˌ___-/-]	I am going to Koforidua to-morrow morning.
Mɛni oyaafɛɛ yɛ dzɛi? [ˌ___/-ˌ_-]	What are you going to do there?
Miyahe kokoo [ˌ___ˌ_]	I shall buy cocoa.
Miikpa o fai, hã mi nu fioo [ˌ___ˌ___ˌ_-]	I beg your pardon, but could I have a little water?
Makeɛ o noko [ˌ___-]	I will tell you something.
Wɔ dze atɕɛrɛ wɔ [ˌ_ˌ___]	I'll see you again to-morrow.

Record II

Side I

Some Common Greetings and the Replies

General.

Te oyɔɔ tɛŋŋ? [ˌ_ˌ_ˌ_]	R. Miye dzogbanɔ [____]
How are you?	I am well.
Oye dzogbanɔ lo? [____ˌ_]	R. Hɛɛ, miye dzogbanɔ. Bo hũ
Are you well?	oyɛ dzogbanɔ?
	[/-____ˌ_]
	Yes, I am well. And you, are you well?
Maniɪŋ? [ˌ_ˌ_]	R. Maɪ dzɔ [ˌ_ˌ_]
How is the town?	It is peaceful.
Miiga o [ˌ_ˌ_] (to a familiar)	R. Miŋhere o nɔ [ˌ___ˌ_]
I greet you.	I respond.

In the morning.

Awɔŋ? [ˌ_ˌ_]	R. Awɔ hi [ˌ_ˌ_]
How did you sleep?	I slept well.
Odze mrã [ˌ_ˌ_]	R. Yaa anyemi [ˌ___ˌ_]
You are out early.	Yes.

In the evening.

Miyawɔ [ˈˈ-]

I am going to sleep.

R. Yoo. Yaawɔ dzogbaŋ

[_/___] Sleep well.

Visiting.

Agoo [_] (before entering) R. Amɛe [_] Come in!

Oba kɛ omanyɛ [____ˈ]

Welcome.

Miyaba [ˈˈ-]

I go and will come again.

R. Yoo. Yaaba dzogbaŋ

[_/___]

Go and come in safety.

mibasra nye [ˈ__ˈ_]

My visit is ended.

R. Yoo. Wɔŋda o ʃi. Yaaba

dzogbaŋ [____/___]

Thank you for coming.

Record II*Side 2***Conversation**

The following is the text of a short conversation written by Mr. E. A. W. Engmann, B.A., of Odumase, and recorded by Mr. T. Q. Botchway. The translation is somewhat free.

— / — — — \
 X. Ataa Kofi hã manye.
 Good morning Kofi.

— —
 — —
 Y. Manye ba.
 Good morning.

— \ — — — / — \ — — — — \
 X. Kwɛɛ nɛɛgbɛ oyaa leebi nɛɛ ni ohie edo nɛkɛ nɛɛ.
 I say! Where are you off to this morning and with such a serious face.

- Y. Hm. Ataa. Akɛɛ nitʃumɔ egbee ʃi yɛ PWD no ni miʃaa mihe
Hm. They say there is plenty of work to be got at the PWD

miyakwɛ. akɛ aleenɔ mi hu aahe mi lo.
and so I am hurrying there to see if I can get a place.

- X. Lɛɛlɛŋ, bei nɛɛ amli lɛ nitʃumɔ taomɔ edzra saŋŋ dientʃɛ, ni
Truly, these days it is difficult to find work and if you don't go

kɛ mɔ okɛfee ʃwemɔ lɛ, homɔ eye oŋamei kɛ obii.
about it seriously your wife and children will go hungry.

- Y. Anɔkwale. Bɛ kɛdze otʃii enumɔ ni minitʃumɔ fite yɛ Nsawam
Too true. I lost my job at Nsawam five weeks ago and I am

nɛɛ lɛ, makeɛ o akɛ emli ewa ehã mi fioo. Kɛdzɛ miŋã
having a pretty rough time of it. My wife did her bit,

mɔdɛŋbɔɔ hewɔ ni, kulɛ ewa saŋŋ. Nto ole akɛ kɔmi ehoo.
otherwise things would have been grim. You know that

Aafeɛ otʃii etɛ kɛ fã nɛɛ lɛ, ɛʃɔ kenam efataa kɔmi lɛ he,
she sells boiled kenkey; well, for about the past three and a

ni nohewɔlɛ esãa ʃi kwraa. Aheɔ tamɔ noko.
half weeks she has been frying fish as well. It is so good,
it's sold out almost before it gets to the market. It
sells like anything.

- X. Asonokwa, Afuanye 'ε le o; onan eno yoo. Humi, bleoo,
Indeed. Afua-nye is a good wife. There are not many like

fi eetfu enii.

her. There is no fuss with her, she is quiet but she gets on with the job.

Miŋa kɛɛ mi ake ehoo kɔmi fii enyɔ dzenamo agbene.

My wife told me that she boils kenkey twice a day now.

- Y. Leɛleŋ, maŋkɛ hɪma le, ekɔmi ebe momo ni no nitfulɔi ni yaa
It's true, she has her kenkey ready early in the morning so

Gbadafi ke nii le naa heo hɪeo amɛdɛ keyaa.

workmen going to Cantonments and such places can get it to take along with them.

- X. Ei, Ataa Kofi, ni otɕi Nsawam tā nɛɛ ehā mikai sane ko.
Eh, Kofi, your mentioning Nsawam reminds me of something.

- Y. Meni sane?
What is it?

- X. Nyɛɛɛ Sohāa le mike onyɛmi Akuɛɛ kpe yɛ Makola masɛi ni
Last Friday I met your cousin Akuɛɛ near Makola market

miwa le ni wɔgba sane fioo. Dzee no ebaakɛ mi ake, gbi
and I stopped him and we had a little chat. He told me

Dzu lɛ ni wɔgbɔ̃lɛ mli lɛ, Cadbury-bii lɛ batʃɛ lɛ koni egblɛ
that on that very day Cadburys had sent for him to go and

kokoo kɛdʒɛ Nsawam kɛba Gã ehã amɛ. Ekɛɛ aahe kokoo
cart cocoa for them from Nsawam to Accra. He said cocoa

ko pɛ ni wa. ɔ̃mɛnɛɣmɛnɛ kɛ mɔ̃ oye kokoo-ɣmɔ̃ lɛ blɛ ɔ̃tɔ.
is selling like wildfire. Nowadays if you have a cocoa farm
you do all right.

- Y. PWD-bii lɛ miitao wɔ ɣmɛdʒi nyɔ̃ɣma-kɛ-ekome hewɔlɛ
The PWD people want to see us at eleven so I'll leave

wɔbaagblɛ mli da.
you.

- X. Yaa ni oba.
Goodbye for now.

- Y. Yoo, wɔɔkpe ekɔ̃ɣ.
Right o! See you soon.

APPENDIX

Record I

Side 1

1. bi	2. kofi	3. sikle	4. te
5. tɛ	6. ke	7. kɛ	8. he
9. hɛ	10. ga	11. ta	12. dade
13. eto	14. etɔ	15. bo	16. bɔ
17. efo	18. efɔ	19. bu	20. fufɔ
21. duku	22. fi	23. fi	24. kɛ
25. kɛ̃	26. ka	27. kã	28. kɔ
29. kɔ̃	30. fu	31. fũ	

1. tʃɛ	2. tʃofã	3. tʃui
4. dʒɛŋ	5. Dzu	6. dzata
7. nyɛ̃	8. nyɔ̃mɔ̃	9. enyɔ̃
10. ŋɔɔ	11. ablogo	12. ablongwa
13. mla	14. ŋmlɛ	15. kplotoo
16. gblã		
17. trɔ	18. dzra	19. tʃwɛɛbo
20. mra	21. here	22. dzurɔ̃
23. aʃinao	24. ʃɔ̃tɔ̃	25. kpai
26. kpakpo	27. akpaki	28. gbɛ
29. gbogbo	30. agba	31. ŋme
32. ŋmɔ̃	33. ɛŋmomi	34. tʃa
35. tʃwa	36. dza	37. dzwa
38. dzɛi	39. dzwɛi	40. ʃɛ
41. ʃwɛ	42. ʃane	43. ʃwane
44. ʋi	45. ʋere	46. ʋɛ

Record I

Side 2

1. pi	2. pii
3. gbe	4. gbee

THE PRONUNCIATION OF GA

5. ba	6. baa
7. tɔ	8. tɔɔ
9. ko	10. koo
11. bu	12. buu
13. biɛ	14. kao
15. abeo	16. kue
17. Akua	18. wuo
19. ebio	20. efeɔ
21. ebeɔ	
22. ehoo	23. ewuo
24. toi	25. bai
26. fai	

1. wu	2. fine	3. gbobilɔ
4. bi	5. tedzi	6. halamɔ
7. fɪa	8. tɕosemɔ	9. notomɔ
10. mfoa	11. ŋta	12. ŋkatie
13. tɕoku	14. kwakwe	15. fika
16. sisa	17. duku	18. biyoo
19. gbee	20. looflɔ	21. aboloo
22. nɛɛ	23. nii	24. yibii
25. nɛɛgbe	26. elaa	27. kaaloo
28. elaa	29. eláa	30. mitáa
31. mitáã	32. kaa	33. kɛɛ
34. hoo	35. madzu gbekɛbii lɛ ahe	
36. gbekɛ lɛ ekplee tɕu lɛŋ botemɔ		
37. tɕekwɛ	38. mitɕekwɛ	
39. tedzi	40. Ama tedzi	
41. baa	42. baa lɛ	
43. adeka	44. adeka lɛ	
45. kponɔ	46. kponɔ ko	
47. eblɔ	48. eblɔ amɛ	
49. mibahe	50. mibahe komi	
51. mihoo	52. mihoo yɔɔ lɛ	

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